

From Pat Evangelista

EPA's Notes from September 6, 2016 "Concerned C8 Citizens" Meeting
Petersburgh, New York

Meeting commenced at 7:00 PM at the Petersburg Veterans Memorial Hall located at 71 Main Street, Petersburg, N.Y. 12138. Meeting organizers had copies of Gina McCarthy's September 1, 2016 letter to Commissioners Zucker and Seggos available for meeting attendees.

In addition to Rensselaer County Executive Kathy Jimino, the following representatives from USEPA Region 2, NYSDOH, NYSDEC, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and Rensselaer County Health Department attended the meeting:

Larisa Romanowski, Public Affairs Specialist, USEPA Region 2
Mark Maddaloni, Toxicologist, USEPA Region 2
Pat Evangelista, Office of the Regional Administrator, USEPA Region 2
Thomas Gentile, Air Toxics Section Chief, Division of Air Resources, NYSDEC
Jim Quinn, Project Manager, NYSDEC Region 4
Keith Goertz, Regional Director, NYSDEC Region 4
Robert Swider, Regional Environmental Health Director, NYSDOH
Jim Bowers, NYSDOH
Dawn Hettrick, NYSDOH
Dr. David Smith, Division of Animal Industry Director, New York State Department of Ag & Markets
Rich Elder, Rensselaer County Environmental Health Director
Maryfran Wachunas, Rensselaer County Public Health Director

Various updates related to the PFOA contamination and status of the landfill on Jones Hollow Road were provided to an audience of approximately 90 people and questions were answered.

Rensselaer County Health Department

Reported they collected 496 water samples from private wells from 393 homes (some homes sampled more than once). The PFOA concentration in these samples was presented as follows:

68 samples below 20ppt
35 samples above 20ppt and below 70ppt
58 samples between 70ppt and 1000ppt
13 samples greater than 1000ppt
172 samples at non-detect

52 POETS have been installed and are operational. An additional 10 POETS are in the process of being cleared for operation and 9 are pending installation. Anyone in the Town of Petersburg wishing to have their well sampled can call Rensselaer County Health Department at (518) 270-2655 and the request will be forwarded to NYSDEC for action.

Residents are seeking further clarification from DEC on the details related to the maintenance of the POET systems. DEC has indicated that they will provide additional details at a future meeting.

NYSDEC

Reported their negotiations with Taconic Plastics are going slowly and how they believe the company will only be willing to do so much. Taconic will not commit to do any work related to the landfill or private wells below 70ppt. They are willing to perform investigation related to their facility and incurring the cost of POETS for private wells above 70ppt. Taconic has also agreed to pay for bottled water and its distribution. NYS has committed to paying for 6 months of residents' water bills. DEC provided copies of data for landfill and information related to maintenance of POETS. DEC also requested residents to come forward with any information related to suspected dump sites.

DEC indicated it plans to commence investigation work at the landfill this coming fall. PFOA and PFOS have been found there. There was a strong request from residents that DEC take immediate action to contain the leachate migrating from the landfill.

DEC reported that water coolers have been installed at the Berlin school while a filtration system for the school is being designed and will be installed. DEC further indicated that a municipal filtration system for Berlin may be challenging and may require looking at other options.

Although they continue to negotiate, DEC expects Taconic to maintain POETS on wells with over 70ppt PFOA while DEC maintains those under 70ppt.

A fish study is also being considered because of the PFOS discovered at the landfill (DEC seems to think the PFOA does not bio accumulate).

DEC will require Taconic to perform stack testing for PFOA and model the results to determine potential community impacts. DEC indicated previous stack testing results which have been publicly requested are being reviewed by in-house attorneys for release.

DEC indicated it does not have a list of vegetables that absorb PFOA the most but it is prudent to wash vegetables.

NYSDOH

NYSDOH approved of GAC system design on August 17, 2016. GAC system expected to be operational by the end of October or November of 2016.

At least one more serum testing event will be scheduled in Hoosick Falls while residents strongly requested event be held in Petersburg.

DOH indicated it analyzed serum for PFOA only. This conflicts with what we had heard from Nathan Graber.

We learned DOH is maintaining leftover blood samples from participants for potential additional future testing as per its agreement with participants. Petersburg resident, Emily Marpe, strongly requested that DOH use these samples, especially those of her children, to analyze for additional PFCs. DOH will follow-up with response.

The following points were made during the meeting's Qs and As session:

- Petersburg needs funding to perform study to determine potential alternative drinking water sources.
- Petersburg issued its own “no fishing” and “no swimming” advisory (related to potential discharges from the landfill).
- Resident identified concern about his observation of increased prey bird fatalities and requested NYS investigate. DEC indicated it would perform necropsies if dead birds were provided. Resident committed to delivering dead owl to DEC.
- County Executive Kathy Jimino stressed the importance of good communication between EPA and the other involved state and federal agencies.
- The question/concern was raised about whether sampling is being conducted to test for the chemical Tconic Plastics is currently using in its plant (which replaced the PFOA). Issue of breastfeeding was raised by a resident and general response recommending breastfeeding was provided based on benefits of breastfeeding outweighing risks associated with exposure to PFOA.
- Significant frustration expressed about the delays associated with NYS negotiations with Taconic.
- A resident reiterated she hardly never drank water from her private well and yet she has a blood serum level of over 200ppb. She is still convinced her exposure is from air emissions from Taconic. DEC intends to further investigate her situation.
- Next meeting is to be held on October 6, 2016 at the same location.

Media Coverage

- Time Warner Cable News
- NBC Channel 13
- Eastwick Press

Enck, Judith

From: Seggos, B B (DEC) <b.seggos@dec.ny.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2016 6:10 PM
To: Enck, Judith; Zucker, Howard A (HEALTH)
Subject: RE: Petersburg Articles

Judith,

As directed by the Governor, we are in regular contact with the leadership in Petersburg and other municipalities that are grappling with drinking water contamination.

In Petersburg this winter, we helped provide bottled water to the Town and secured an agreement from Taconic to cover the cost. As to the water shortage from last weekend noted in the articles, we spoke with the Town Supervisor. He took full responsibility for not having enough water on hand. The state offered to supply him with extra water and he declined. He assured us that will have ample supply on hand for the upcoming distributions on Wednesday and Saturday. Tops also continues to make water available to residents.

The state has ample bottled water on hand and stands ready to assist communities when called upon.

Thanks,
Basil

From: Enck, Judith [mailto:Enck.Judith@epa.gov]
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2016 4:41 PM
To: Seggos, B B (DEC) <b.seggos@dec.ny.gov>; Zucker, Howard A (HEALTH) <howard.zucker@health.ny.gov>
Subject: FW: Petersburg Articles

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Commissioners: the articles below illustrate the concerns I raised with you last week. if it is so difficult to obtain bottled water, I suspect many people are just giving up and drinking what may be contaminated water. Please let me know what EPA can do to assist with this situation. Thank you, Judith

Folks in Petersburg have run out of bottled water following PFOA contamination

By Carmen Chau May 15, 2016, 5:54 pm

PETERSBURGH, NY (NEWS10) – Community members in Petersburg are voicing their frustrations after finding out the water bottles have run out at the Town Hall.

Several people have told News10ABC it's been nothing but an inconvenience, especially felling like they're left in the dark with no answers.

News10ABC talked to the Town Supervisor, who didn't want to be on camera, and he admitted that he thought he ordered enough water but he was wrong.

"Water shouldn't be running out," said Emily Marpe who lives in Petersburg.

It was Saturday at 11a.m. when water ran out at the Town Hall. People were then directed to go to Tops in Hoosick Falls, which many said is a drive that's out of their way.

"We shouldn't have to drive. For me, it's 1.8 miles just to drive to the Town Hall back and forth, said Marpe.

In order to pick up water, people must have tickets that can be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office, which is only open at certain hours.

"This town is getting more and more frustrated," said Marpe.

Water was being distributed five hours a week at the Town Hall. People have been allowed to get one gallon per day.

But instead, people in the small town of Petersburg find themselves filing their trunks over 20 miles away.

"They are pretty frustrated because some people have been getting water filters and all that in Hoosick Falls and nobody else has been getting them and it's just very stressful and it's irritating," said Renee Wagner, who lives in Cherry Plain.

"There should just be an overabundance. It should be there," said Marpe.

Emily Marpe said she bought a well for a reason but it's no longer in use since tests showed it had PFOA levels of 2,100 parts per trillion.

The Town Supervisor told News10ABC actions are being taken. The DEC will be visiting on May 23 to do groundwater work and a design for the filter is already in place.

But the Petersburg community said that's not good enough.

"I need to see that this filter is going to work over a long period of time. You can't just force me to start giving my kids this water," said Marpe.

The meeting will take place at the Town Hall Monday at 7:30 p.m. and News10ABC will be there to cover it.

The Town Supervisor also told News10ABC he'll be ordering more water Monday which will arrive Wednesday so people can continue to come to the Town Hall in Petersburg to get their water.

Town board to meet in Petersburg to discuss PFOA crisis

By WRGB Staff Monday, May 16th 2016

PETERSBURGH - People in Petersburg will meet with the town board to discuss the PFOA crisis.

That's after the mayor says they ran out of bottled water this weekend.

The city has been supplying it to residents for months.

Tests in February showed levels of PFOA in the municipal water supply.

The mayor tells us this is the first time the city has run out of bottled water.

The top grocery store in Hoosick Falls is still offering bottled water, and the mayor says he plans to order more than usual this week.

Results from soil testing are starting to be released as Bennington also deals with PFOA contamination in its water.

The state's DEC says the first tests show very low levels of the chemical, safety standard for PFOA in soil is 300 parts per trillion.

A spokeswoman for the DEC told Vermont public radio that the results are below that level.

Enck, Judith

From: Seggos, B B (DEC) <b.seggos@dec.ny.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2016 5:09 PM
To: Enck, Judith
Cc: Zucker, Howard A (HEALTH)
Subject: RE: PFOA concerns in Petersburg

Judith,

Thank you for your email, but the state has been providing all necessary assistance to local leaders and residents in the Town of Petersburg since becoming aware of PFOA contamination in February.

As you know, the state immediately secured a commitment for free bottled water for all residents at the nearest grocery store (Tops), the Town Hall, as well as a commitment from the company to deliver water to elderly and disabled residents so those issues have been addressed.

The state also secured a commitment from the company to install a carbon filtration system on the Town's system that will remove PFOA.

We are in constant contact with Taconic, the County and the Town and will continue to provide all necessary assistance, including responding to and addressing resident concerns raised in the normal course of business and at last night's Town meeting.

Basil

From: Enck, Judith [mailto:Enck.Judith@epa.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2016 9:35 AM
To: Seggos, B B (DEC) <b.seggos@dec.ny.gov>; Zucker, Howard A (HEALTH) <howard.zucker@health.ny.gov>
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Commissioners: see the articles below. There obviously are many issues involved but the one that needs immediate attention is making it easier for residents to access alternative bottled water as the current system has major problems. The over extended volunteer Town Supervisor should not be expected to manage water distribution. Two suggestions:

1. Identify where most residents do their grocery shopping and establish a water pick up process in those stores similar to what is in place at Topp's in Hoosick Falls. This way people don't have to make an extra stop and can easily procure water at any time the store is open. Taconic can voluntarily agree to do this or DEC or DOH could issue an Order. If people have private wells that are not contaminated they would not be eligible for the water, so a system could be established to address that. I imagine that people on the waiting list to get their private wells tested should be eligible for bottled water until their test results come back indicating there is not a problem, if that is the case.

2. I am concerned about elderly and disabled residents who cannot easily carry water from stores. In Hoosick Falls a group of volunteers, called Water Angels, did home delivery but that is a lot to expect of volunteers especially in rural Petersburg. Home delivery of water should be arranged for the home bound. That could also be done voluntarily by Taconic or included in the same Order suggested above.

I am available to discuss at any time.

Judith

212 637 5000

WRGB: Angry residents question PFOA response in Petersburg

By Emily DeFeciani Monday, May 16th 2016

PETERSBURGH--Local communities still dealing with a water contamination crisis are demanding answers from their leaders.

In Petersburg there's an immediate problem on a lot of minds.

How could town officials let the community run out of bottled water?

"People are very mad and they have a right to be," said resident Kathy Lingener.

"We need help in Petersburg, we do. We need our state to recognize us and to help us," said Emily Marpe.

Residents of the small town made a big cry at Monday's town board meeting, particularly frustrated with the response from the supervisor.

But the issue goes beyond local leaders, to the state.

Petersburgh has been dealing with water contamination for months now, but residents say they aren't getting the same help with filtration systems, water testing, and blood testing as a nearby town with similar problems.

"Why is it not a superfund site like they did immediately in Hoosick Falls to get state funding and state help which they're not getting here?" said DJ Lingener.

"Why are Petersburg residents not being treated the same as Hoosick Falls?" said a resident named Emily.

Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin responded, saying "That's a great question, it seems to be two different approaches clearly. They seem to have commanded the attention, which is what we want them to get attention but that same level of attention needs to be paid to Petersburg."

Petersburgh town board meeting gets heated over PFOA

WNYT Staff

Updated: 05/16/2016 11:37 PM

Created: 05/16/2016 6:27 PM

PETERSBURGH - The max occupancy is 33 at the Petersburg town hall board room, but more than 50 packed in for the board's meeting on Monday. As he held his eyes to the table, it seemed like the walls were closing in on town supervisor Peter Schapook.

"I gotta stop right there," Schapook said, interrupting a member of crowd during the public comment period.

"This town board has been working very diligently at the speed we can work. None of us are professionals.

Enck, Judith

From: Enck, Judith
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 5:49 PM
To: 'howard.zucker@health.ny.gov'; 'Seggos, B B (DEC)'
Subject: PFOA in drinking water in Petersburg

Commissioners: EPA has received phone calls from residents of Petersburg, expressing serious concerns about how the PFOA issues have been handled in that community. I spoke with Robert Gorghen, a resident of Petersburg yesterday. He can be reached at 321 890 2600 or boardmanapts@verizon.net. He has spoken with Gene Leff a few times but is requesting a call from DOH and DEC to go over some of his concerns. In summary:

1. Not easy for residents to access bottled water. They are given tickets based on the number of people in their household and are given one gallon a day per person. The town hall has limited hours for people to pick up the water and sometimes the wait can be as long as 2 hours.
2. Residents on private wells were told they would have their private wells sampled by the state or county health departments but have now been told that they need to be on a waiting list before having their wells tested.
3. Mr. Gorghen had his blood tested over a month ago and is anxious to receive results. He said he went to Hoosick Falls to get his blood tested and requests that DOH establish a blood sampling effort in the town of Petersburg.
4. He understands that DEC is negotiating with Taconic Plastics, but in the meantime, very little information is being shared with the community.
5. He claims that DEC is not doing soil sampling, sampling the Little Hoosick River or looking at the closed local landfill which he has reason to believe may be at least a partial source of the contamination.

Remember, the contamination is in a small public water supply, along with private wells. Mr. Gorghen says that in 2003, Dupont consulted with Taconic Plastics on how to deal with water contamination in their own buildings, but both companies failed to inform nearby residents that they too may have been drinking contaminated water.

EPA is happy to provide assistance with Petersburg. Just let me know what we can do to help. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Judith Enck

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Good to hear but I think it's important to engage with some of the local residents who have contacted epa to explain that waiting in line for tickets and then take the tickets to the town hall for one gallon per day per person is not working out well. some people are buying their own water, which is fine, but I am concerned that others are just drinking contaminated water because aside from the recent water shortage, the process is very burdensome.

Residents are also on a waiting list to get private wells tested by DOH and and don't know when that will occur. Further, while I understand that if a consent order is being negotiated with Taconic Plastics, you cannot publicly announce what is being negotiated but it would be good for, at a minimum, the EPA to know what is being done to control the source, address the plume and is there a schedule to install carbon filtration or another treatment technology on the public water supply. We can discuss next week or perhaps one of the DEC lawyers could phone Paul Simon, our assistant regional counsel, with an update on these broader issues.

Thanks.

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But the issue goes beyond local leaders, to the state.

Petersburgh has been dealing with water contamination for months now, but residents say they aren't getting the same help with filtration systems, water testing, and blood testing as a nearby town with similar problems.

"Why is it not a superfund site like they did immediately in Hoosick Falls to get state funding and state help which they're not getting here?" said DJ Lingener.

"Why are Petersburg residents not being treated the same as Hoosick Falls?" said a resident named Emily.

Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin responded, saying "That's a great question, it seems to be two different approaches clearly. They seem to have commanded the attention, which is what we want them to get attention but that same level of attention needs to be paid to Petersburg."

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"I gotta stop right there," Schapook said, interrupting a member of crowd during the public comment period. "This town board has been working very diligently at the speed we can work. None of us are professionals. None of us get paid. In fact, I haven't taken a salary yet as supervisor. To say that we're not doing all we can do, is totally unfair."

In an often out of control public comment period, people urged the town board to do more in forcing the state and Taconic to fix their PFOA problem. People asked for home bottled water deliveries paid for by Taconic, an independent review of negotiations between the state and Taconic, and generally, a faster fix.

"The town is really getting lost, because nobody knows what they're doing," said Emily Marpe, a town resident.

New test results by Rensselaer County on Monday show nine more homes are over the so-called safe limit set by the EPA.

That brings the total to 47 of 173 private well tests that are over the 100 parts per trillion limit. Rensselaer County says over a dozen filtration systems have been installed so far. 72 are over the 20 parts per trillion level, including Edward Perrotti-Sousis in his Potter Hill Road home.

"Anybody over 100 parts per trillion is getting a filtration system. That's the negotiation. I said, where does that leave me? Well, I'm kind of out of luck here," said Perrotti-Sousis.

Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin was listening in at the meeting. He acknowledges the position the town board is in.

"Understand, that the folks sitting at that table are not the enemy. They're doing the best they can," said McLaughlin, R-Melrose.

McLaughlin says the state and Taconic are the ones who need to start moving faster.

"You heard that tonight from the town board, who is rightly frustrated that they're not getting information from the DEC, or the DOH, or the Cuomo administration."

About the town running out of bottled water on Saturday. The town supervisor apologized and said he just didn't order enough. He said it won't happen again. The next shipment is available on Wednesday.

Enck, Judith

From: Enck, Judith
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2016 10:32 AM
To: 'Seggos, B B (DEC)'
Subject: pfoa pfos catch up
Attachments: Concerned C8 Citizens doc 1.doc

Hi Basil: I just received this letter and wanted to make sure it got to you.

On other related matters, it's great that DEC is sending survey questions to other potential pfoa/pfos users throughout New York. Please send me the survey that was sent out and the companies it was sent to. Tha

I thought the Newburgh meeting went well. Martin Bran did a terrific job bringing everyone up to date. It sure seems like State Superfund designation should be seriously pursued for Stewart airport and related environs.

Finally, I recently had the pleasure of meeting the New Hampshire environmental commissioner. There are so many similar issues facing NH, Vermont and New York on pfoa and pfos issues, I think it would be worthwhile for the 3 states and EPA Region 1 and Region 2 leadership to meet in person to share information. The states may want to take the lead in setting that up, but if you think that would be productive, I would be happy to have my office do the legwork for setting up a meeting with : NY, Vermont, NH, and EPA Region 1 and Region 2. Agenda would be to share information and updates on how to most effectively work on this drinking water issue.

Take care,
Judith

From: bjiguere [mailto:bjiguere@fairpoint.net]
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2016 10:09 AM
To: Enck, Judith <Enck.Judith@epa.gov>
Subject: Concerned C8 Citizens - Petersburg NY

Administrator Enck - I am sending you a copy of a letter that was emailed to NYSDEC Commissioner Seggos. Our committee was formed due to frustration of residents not being informed of our current situation as a class 2 Superfund Site. Although, our understanding DEC has assigned a project manager to the Town of Petersburg there has been no contact from him. We are currently seeking a representative from NYSDEC to come and speak with us so that we have a better understanding of the Superfund and are rights as citizens.

Concerned C8 Citizens

Petersburgh, NY 12138

Basil Seggos, Commissioner NYSDEC
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-1011

RE: PFOA matters in Petersburgh NY, Rensselaer County

Dear Commissioner,

Contamination of drinking water supplies by the toxic industrial chemical perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA, or C8) is a continuing concern to the residents of Petersburgh, NY, Rensselaer County. Taconics Plastics manufacturing operation at 136 Coon Book Road Petersburgh NY 12138 has recently been declared a class 2 State Superfund Site.

Overall, in every important matter of scientific assessment and regulatory judgment, the DEC appears to consistently have come down on the side of being less protective of human health and the environment and highly favorable to the polluting company, Taconic Plastics

A number of public water systems and private drinking water wells tested in recent weeks have been found to contain elevated levels of perfluorinated compounds (PFC5), in particular, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). Several of these wells have shown levels of PFOA that are above the EPA Provisional Health Advisory of 0.4 ug/l. Based on the information available to date

New York Department of Environmental Conservation has determined that Taconic Plastic is responsible for the cleanup of the Site, restoration of impacted groundwater and drinking water, other actions necessary to protect public health and the environment, and any costs DEC incurs for addressing the impacts of this contamination.

At our Concerned C8 Citizen meeting, we discussed a number of critical steps that need to be taken immediately to address the threats to public health and the environment posed by the PFC5 contamination. To begin identifying the full extent of the contamination, Rensselaer County DOH has initially sampled potentially contaminated wells and water sources, within an approximate three mile radius of the Facility. To date, this sampling effort has detected impacts to private and public drinking water wells located both within and outside this three mile radius.

Concerned C8 Citizens

Petersburgh, NY 12138

At this time, we strongly request that Taconic commit to the following:

1. Bottled Water:

- a. Taconic will take over home delivery of bottled water to all properties requesting it. Taconic will take over the task of providing a convenient location with extending available pick up times for those who want to continue to pick of water.

2. Site Investigation, including Sampling and Analysis:

- a. Promptly submit a work scope for sampling and analysis of surficial soils at locations where an increased likelihood of exposure of sensitive populations to soil exists (e.g., schools, daycare centers, and playgrounds).
- b. Submit a work scope for sampling and analysis of soils at agricultural farms and fields.
- c. Retain the services of a qualified environmental consultant and submit a work plan for a full site investigation of the Taconic facility and impacted off-site locations.

4. Private Water Supply Treatment:

For **all detected** PFOA /PFOS levels of affected properties that are serviced by private drinking water wells, and are not designated for connection to a public water supply, design, install, and maintain, individual Point of Entry treatment systems (POETs). For **all non-detect** levels, private wells to be sampled bi-annually until such a time to be determined unnecessary

5. Blood monitoring to be offered in a convenient location in Petersburg, NY.

6. Full disclosure of current chemicals used by Taconic along with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) copies supplied to town and local fire department per NYS Building & Fire Codes.

7. Disclosure of all by-product disposal practices both past and present by Taconic

8. Disclosure of VOC/emissions from stacks/scrubbers from Taconic

9. Full disclosure on reporting practices to state agencies and responses to the levels that were reported by Taconic

Citizens C8 Concerns look forward to working with you on all matters addressed in this letter.

Respectfully,

Brenda Jiguere
518-658-0664

Concerned C8 Citizens

Petersburgh, NY 12138

cc: Judith Enck, Administrator EPA Region 2
Howard Zucker, Commissioner NYSDOH
Alan Webster, Supervisor Town of Petersburgh, NY
Town Board of Petersburgh, NY

